

What is Claimed is:

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All
1. A method of magnetic resonance imaging of regional blood oxygenation which comprises administering into the vasculature of a vascularised human or non-human animal subject a T_2 blood pool contrast agent, detecting a magnetic resonance signal from at least part of the vasculature of said subject into which said contrast agent distributes, and manipulating said signal to generate an indication of the partial pressure of oxygen (pO_2) in at least part of said vasculature.
 2. The method of Claim 1 wherein R_1 of blood in an artery is determined and hematocrit is determined therefrom.
 3. The method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein hematocrit and $R2^*$ of blood in a vein are determined and pO_2 in said vein is determined therefrom.
 4. The method of Claim 1 wherein said indication is an image indicative of pO_2 .
 5. The method of Claim 1 wherein said contrast agent is administered in an effective amount such that $R2^*$ of venous blood is less than $R2^*$ of arterial blood.
 6. The method of Claim 4 wherein said contrast agent is administered in an effective amount such that $R2$ of venous blood is greater than $R2$ of arterial blood.
 7. The method of Claim 6 wherein a non-spoiled gradient echo sequence is used to generate a magnetic resonance

image.

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein a spoiled gradient echo sequence is used to generate a further magnetic resonance image and the images from the spoiled and non-spoiled gradient echo sequences are subtracted to produce an image in which the signal difference between arteries and veins is enhanced.

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